

Full-time student means an individual who meets the requirements for full time attendance as defined by the school in which they are enrolled.

HPSP means the VA Health Professional Scholarship Program authorized by 38 U.S.C. 7601 through 7619.

Mobility agreement means a signed legal document between VA and a participant of the HPSP or VIOMPSP, in which the participant agrees to accept assignment at a VA facility selected by VA where he or she will fulfill the obligated service requirement. A mobility agreement must be included in the participant's acceptance agreement. Relocation to another geographic location may be required.

Obligated service means the period of time during which the HPSP or VIOMPSP participant must be employed by VA in a full-time clinical occupation for which the degree prepared the participant as a requirement of the acceptance agreement.

Part-time student—(1) *HPSP*. For the purposes of the HPSP, part-time student means an individual who is a VA employee, and who has been accepted for enrollment or enrolled for study leading to a degree on a less than full-time basis but no less than half-time basis.

(2) *VIOMPSP*. For the purposes of the VIOMPSP, part-time student means an individual who has been accepted for enrollment or enrolled for study leading to a degree on a less than full-time basis but no less than half-time basis.

Participant or scholarship program participant means an individual whose application to the HPSP or VIOMPSP has been approved, whose acceptance agreement has been consummated by VA, and who has yet to complete the period of obligated service or otherwise satisfy the obligation or financial liabilities of such agreement.

Required fees means those fees which are charged by the school to all students pursuing a similar curriculum in the same school.

Scholarship Program means the VA Health Professional Scholarship Program (HPSP) authorized by 38 U.S.C. 7601 through 7619.

School means an academic institution that is accredited by a body or bodies recognized for accreditation by the

U.S. Department of Education or by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), and that meets the following requirements:

(1) For the purposes of the HPSP, offers a course of study leading to a degree in a health care service discipline needed by VA.

(2) For the purposes of the VIOMPSP, offers a course of study leading to a degree in visual impairment or orientation and mobility.

School year means for purposes of the HPSP and its stipend payment, and the VIOMPSP, all or part of the 12-month period that starts on the date the participant begins school as a full-time student.

Secretary means the Secretary of Veterans Affairs or designee.

State means one of the several States, Territories and possessions of the United States, the District of Columbia and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

Under Secretary for Health means the Under Secretary for Health of the Department of Veterans Affairs or designee.

VA means the Department of Veterans Affairs.

VA employee means an individual permanently employed by VA. A VA employee does not include an individual who is employed temporarily or on a contractual basis.

VA health care facility means a VA medical center, independent outpatient clinic, domiciliary, nursing home (community living center), residential treatment program, and any of a variety of community based clinics (including community based outpatient clinics, rural health resource centers, primary care telehealth clinics, and Vet Centers), consolidated mail outpatient pharmacies, and research centers.

VIOMPSP means the Visual Impairment and Orientation and Mobility Professional Scholarship Program authorized by 38 U.S.C. 7501 through 7505.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 301, 7501(a)(1), 7504, 7602(a), 7604(1)(B), 7633)

[78 FR 51069, Aug. 20, 2013]

§ 17.602 Eligibility.

(a) To be eligible for a scholarship under this program an applicant must—

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(1) Be unconditionally accepted for enrollment or be enrolled as a full-time student in an accredited school located in a State;

(2) Be pursuing a degree annually designated by the Secretary for participation in the Scholarship Program;

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7602(a)(1), 7612(b)(1))

(3) Be in a discipline or program annually designated by the Secretary for participation in the Scholarship Program;

(4) Be a citizen of the United States; and

(5) Submit an application to participate in the Scholarship Program together with a signed contract.

(6) *Clinical tours.* An applicant for a scholarship under the HPSP must agree to perform clinical tours while enrolled in the course of education or training for which the scholarship is provided. VA will determine the assignments and locations of the clinical tour.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7618(b))

(b) To be eligible for a scholarship as a part-time student under this program, an applicant must satisfy requirements of paragraph (a) of this section and in addition must—

(1) Be a full-time VA employee permanently assigned to a VA health care facility at the time of application and on the date when the scholarship is awarded;

(2) Remain a VA employee for the duration of the scholarship award.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7612(c)(3)(B))

(c) Any applicant who, at the time of application, owes a service obligation to any other entity to perform service after completion of the course of study is ineligible to receive a scholarship under the Department of Veterans Affairs Scholarship Program.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7602(b))

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 2900-0352)

[47 FR 10810, Mar. 12, 1982, as amended at 48 FR 37399, Aug. 18, 1983; 54 FR 28674, July 7, 1989; 78 FR 51070, Aug. 20, 2013]

§ 17.603 Availability of HPSP scholarships.

(a) *General.* A HPSP scholarship will be awarded only when necessary to assist VA in alleviating shortages or anticipated shortages of personnel in the health professions stated in paragraph (b) of this section. VA will determine the existence of shortage of personnel in accordance with specific criteria for each health care profession. VA has the authority to establish the number of scholarships to be awarded in a fiscal year, and the number that will be awarded to full-time and part-time students.

(b) *Qualifying fields of education.* VA will grant HPSP scholarships in a course of study in those disciplines or programs where recruitment is necessary for the improvement of health care of veterans. Those disciplines or programs are listed in 38 U.S.C. 7401(1) and (3).

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7401(1), (3), 7612(b)(2), 7612(b)(4), and 7603(b)(1))

[78 FR 51070, Aug. 20, 2013]

§ 17.604 Application for the HPSP.

An applicant for the HPSP must submit an accurate and complete application, including a signed written acceptance agreement.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7612(c)(1)(B))

(The Office of Management and Budget has approved the information collection requirements in this section under control number 2900-0793.)

[78 FR 51070, Aug. 20, 2013]

§ 17.605 Selection of participants.

(a) *General.* In deciding which HPSP application to approve, VA will first consider applications submitted by applicants entering their final year of education or training and applicants who previously received HPSP scholarships and who meet the conditions of paragraph (f) of this section. Except for paragraph (f) of this section, applicants will be evaluated and selected using the criteria specified in paragraph (b) of this section. If there are a larger number of equally qualified applicants than there are awards to be made, then VA will first select veterans, and then use a random method as the basis for